

Facing Pages 2009 Statewide Convening – October 30, 2009
Poets House – New York, N.Y.

Presenter, Moderator, and Planning Committee Bios
***Beyond the Tangled Web:
Envisioning a Comprehensive Technology Strategy
For Your Literary Organization***

Maribeth Batcha is the publisher and co-founder of One Story, a literary magazine featuring one short story mailed to 6,000 subscribers every three weeks. She has worked in magazine circulation for almost 20 years for titles including *Lingua Franca* and *The Progressive*. In addition to circulation consulting, she writes marketing and development copy for nonprofits, including the 92nd Street Y and the National Academy Foundation. She has a BA from NYU and an MFA from Columbia.

Jen Benka holds a degree in journalism from Marquette University, an MFA in poetry from The New School, and a certificate in arts management from the Arts Extension Service at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has worked in the nonprofit sector for close to 20 years, serving as Managing Director at Poets & Writers for eight of them. Before Poets & Writers, she served as the Associate Director of Community Shares in southeastern Wisconsin, and as the Development Director of 9to5, National Association of Working Women. She has received awards from Intermedia Arts, the Poetry/Film Workshop, the Wisconsin Arts Board and the Xeric Foundation for her poetry and performance work. Her collection of poems, *A Box of Longing With Fifty Drawers*, was published by Soft Skull Press in 2005.

Alexis Boehm, Managing Director of Circulation and Development, has been with BOMB since 2007. Prior to joining the BOMB team she worked in fundraising and event planning, and has been a reader for several literary magazines.

Nick Burd attended the University of Iowa and received his MFA from The New School. His first novel, *The Vast Fields of Ordinary*, was published in May 2009 to critical acclaim by The New York Times, *Publisher's Weekly*, and *Kirkus Reviews*. Nick lives in Brooklyn, NY and works at the international literary and human rights association, PEN American Center.

Rob Casper is the Programs Director for the Poetry Society of America, as well as the Publisher of the literary magazine *jubilat* and the co-founder of the *jubilat*/Jones Reading Series in Amherst, MA. He also serves as magazine representative on the board of the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses and as the Poetry Chair for the Brooklyn Book Festival. Casper lives in Brooklyn with his wife, the poet Matthea Harvey.

Ken Chen is Executive Director of the Asian American Writers Workshop.

Geoffrey Gatz is the editor and Publisher of BlazeVOX [books] and the author of seven books of poetry; *Kenmore: Poem Unlimited* and *Not So Fast Robespierre* are now available from Menendez Publishing. *HouseCat Kung Fu: Strange Poems for Wild Children* is also available from Meritage Press. He is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY (1993) and Daemen College, Amherst, NY (2002), and served as a U.S. Marine in the first gulf war. He lives in Buffalo, NY with his girlfriend and two cats.

Jerri Lynn Fields has over 20 years management experience in higher education and nonprofit administration with an emphasis on social justice and the arts. Fields is the former executive director of the Hudson Valley Writers' Center based in Sleepy Hollow, NY, a literary arts organization that has advanced the art and craft of writing for over 20 years. She also serves as adjunct faculty at Long Island University where she teaches in the nonprofit management program. She was previously executive director of V-Day, the global movement to end violence against women and girls, which used literature, theatre and activism to raise millions of dollars.

Tonya Foster is a poet and writer. She is co-editor of *Third Mind: Teaching Creative Writing through Visual Art*, her first full-length collection of poetry; *Swarm of Bees in High Court*, is forthcoming in 2010 from Belladonna Books and Futurepoem Books. She is one of several bloggers on the Poetry Foundation's Harriet. A doctoral student in English at the CUNY Graduate Center, Tonya received an MFA in Poetry from University of Houston.

Paul Hamill's poetry publications include *Winter Mind* (2003), *The Year of Blue Snow: Northern Poems* (2001), and many poems in journals including: *Poetry*, *Georgia Review*, *Southern Review*, *Seneca Review*, and *CortlandReview.com*. A graduate of Boston College and Stanford, he works as an administrator at Ithaca College. His the former Poet Laureate of Tompkins County

Beth Harrison is the Associate Director & Director of Development at the Academy of American Poets. Prior to joining the Academy, Beth was the Development Specialist for Literary Publishing at the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses. She has also worked as a development consultant for arts organizations and nonprofit presses and as an editor for Princeton Architectural Press and Oxford University Press. She has a B.A. in English/creative writing and religion from Miami University and is the founding editor of the literary magazine *Spinning Jenny*.

Heather A. Hitchens was appointed Executive Director of the New York State Council on the Arts by former Governor Eliot Spitzer and then Lt. Governor David Paterson. She assumed her post at the Council on August 1, 2007. Ms. Hitchens came to the Council after serving for nearly a decade as President of the renowned composer service organization Meet The Composer. During her tenure at Meet The Composer, she revitalized the Organization's national grant-making programs and substantially strengthened its operations by establishing a multi-million dollar endowment fund and generating a more than 30-fold increase in individual giving. Prior to Meet The Composer, Ms. Hitchens served as Executive Director of the Delaware Symphony Orchestra and worked in development for the American Music Theater Festival in Philadelphia. A percussionist since age six, she holds a Bachelor of Music Degree from DePauw University in Greencastle, IN and a Master of Science Degree in Arts Administration from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA.

Bob Holman is creating a documentary film series on the poetry of endangered languages and creating an "Endangered Cento" for the Peoples Poetry Language Initiative. He is the author most recently of *A Couple of Ways of Doing Something* (Aperture), a collaboration with Chuck Close; his most recent CD is *The Awesome Whatever* (Bowery Records). He is the proprietor of the Bowery Poetry Club and Executive Director of Bowery Arts & Science and teaches and at NYU and Columbia.

Ron Kavanaugh is publisher and editor of Mosaic Literary Magazine. Launched in 1998, Mosaic is a quarterly print magazine exploring the literary arts by writers of African descent. Each issue

contains a unique blend of profiles, book reviews, and literature lesson plans. Mosaic is published by the Literary Freedom Project, a 501(c)3 tax-exempt not-for-profit arts organization that supports the literary arts through education, creative thinking, and new media.

Michael Kelleher is the Artistic Director of Just Buffalo Literary Center. He is the author of two books of poems, *To Be Sung* and *Human Scale*, both from Blazevox books. With Ammiel Alcalay, he runs the **OlsonNow** project, a blog and series of events, dedicated to the work of poet Charles Olson. On his own blog, **Pearlblossom Highway**, he is currently engaged in writing an experimental memoir in the form of an alphabetical catalogue of his library.

Hoong Yee Lee Krakauer is the Executive Director of the Queens Council on the Arts. As a lifelong Queens resident, she is a firm believer in the power of the arts to mobilize and transform community. At the Council, she oversees all programmatic activities that include: arts in education initiatives, information services, arts services, and grants programs including the Queens Community Arts Fund, the Individual Artist Initiative, the Arts in the Schools Grant Program. She is the author and illustrator of *Rabbit Mooncakes*, a multicultural picture book for children published by Little, Brown & Company. Her second book, *Peanut & the Chinese Dragon* is in development. She is a graduate of Oberlin College, attended the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria and received a Masters of Music in Piano Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. Hoong Yee is married to a nice Jewish boy from Rockaway, Queens where they live with their three children, Mikki, Remy & Sky.

Christine Leahy is a Program Associate at the New York State Council on the Arts who works in the Literature, Visual Art and Folk Arts Programs. She has written for National Public Radio and The New York Times Book Review and Travel sections, and has worked for the artist Jenny Holzer. She is currently at work on a vegan cookbook, and she also writes and performs songs.

Jeffrey Lependorf serves as Executive Director of the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses and Small Press Distribution. An experienced development professional, his former posts include Development Director for the Creative Capital Foundation and Vice President of Development for Bette Midler's New York Restoration Project. A composer and musician performer as well, his "Masterpieces of Western Music" audio course is now available through Barnes & Noble's "Portable Professor" series and through audible.com.

Veronica Lui is the cofounder and publisher of [Fractious Press](#) and [\[sic\]](#) literary journal, and is currently the managing editor at [Seven Stories Press](#). Before her time at Seven Stories, she was the website producer and editor in chief for an earlier version of Kim's Video and Music's e-commerce website. She is the cofounder of [Washington Heights Free Radio](#), an online radio station collective in operation since 2004.

Kathleen Masterson is Director of the New York State Council on the Arts' Literature Program. Collaborative projects initiated during her tenure at NYSCA include: The Bronx Writers' Center, The Adirondack Center for Writing, the www.nyslittreee Statewide Literary Website/Literary Map of New York State, the New York State Technical Assistance Program (NYTAP) at CLMP and the Literary Presenters Technical Assistance Program (LitTap)/Facing Pages Convenings. Also a lyricist/librettist, she currently is collaborating with NY composer Jerome Kitzke on a work for music ensemble and voices entitled Buffalo Nation (Bison bison) – see www.mapfund.org/grant_626.html -scheduled to premiere at Present Music in Milwaukee in 2011.

Phil Memmer is the Director of the Arts Branch of the YMCA of Greater Syracuse, and the Downtown Writer's Center, central New York's only community center for the literary arts. He is the author of three books of poems, including *Lucifer: A Hagiography*, winner of the 2008 Idaho Prize for Poetry; *Threat of Pleasure*, winner of the 2008 Adirondack Literary Award for Poetry; and *Sweetheart, Baby, Darling*. He is also the author of three chapbooks of poems. His work has appeared in journals such as *Poetry*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Tar River Poetry*, and in several anthologies, including Billy Collins' *180 More: Extraordinary Poems for Every Day*.

Billy Merrell is Web Developer of Poets.org, the website of the Academy of American Poets. He is also the author of *Talking in the Dark*, a poetry memoir (Scholastic, 2003), and a co-editor for *The Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing About LGBTQ and Other Identities* (Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2006), which received a 2006 Lambda Literary Award. Most recently, he is co-author of *Go Ahead, Ask Me* (Simon Pulse, 2009).

Stephen Motika is the coordinator of public programs, exhibitions and education at Poets House and publisher of Nightboat Books.

Debora Ott, LitTAP's Founding Director, serves as Liaison for National Projects. The Founding Director of Just Buffalo Literary Center, Inc., she has designed interfaces between writers and communities to showcase contemporary writing; supported the diversity of America's literary voices; and forged collaborative partnerships with businesses, educational institutions and cultural organizations in support of writers practicing their craft. Debora is the Principal of Smart Solutions, a management consulting firm that focuses on leadership succession, strategic planning, and building capacity in organizations through resource acquisition and audience development. She is the author of *About Face – A Guide to Founder Transition*, commissioned by the New York State Council on the Arts and published by Bright Hill Press (2001). A writer and former editor of Ink Magazine, she serves as Literature & Arts Education Consultant to the Georgia Council for the Arts where she has continued to create innovative programs.

Chad Post is the Director of Open Letter, a literary publishing imprint dedicated to works in translation at the University of Rochester.

Lars Reilly is the systems manager for Seven Stories Press where he oversees sales operations, web infrastructure and promotions, finances, IT and about a million other things. Previously he has worked for a rare book dealer who ran a strictly Internet based business and as a traffic/operations manager in Internet advertising. He lives in Brooklyn.

Adam Robinson is the founder of Publishing Genius, a micropress that has published 26 chapbooks and two novellas, one of which was optioned by Spike Jonze in July. Publishing Genius also runs Everyday Genius, an online journal, and isReads, a poetry broadside project that will be appearing in dozens of cities across the country. His first book, *Adam Robison and Other Poems*, will be released by Narrow House Books this year. In addition, he writes for HTMLGIANT (the Internet literature magazine blog of the future) and plays guitar for the rock band, Sweatpants.

Bertha Rogers founded Bright Hill Literary Center in 1992 with her husband, Ernest M. Fishman. Programs include the New York State Literary Website, www.littree.org, and the NYS Literary Map (in partnership with NYSCA); Word Thursdays Readings; Bright Hill Press Books; Word Thursdays Literary Workshops; the Word & Image Gallery; Share the Words HS Poetry Competition; and the BHC Library and Internet Wing. Rogers is author of the poetry collections

Sleeper, You Wake, Even the Hemlock, A House of Corners, and the forthcoming (2010) *Heart Turned Back*. Her translation of the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf* was published in 2000, and her translation of the Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Poems from the Exeter Book, *Uncommon Creatures, Singing Things*, is forthcoming in 2010. In 2007 the ATA named her winner of the Distinguished Service to the Arts in Education Field at CommonGround.

Jamie Schwartz directs CLMP's New York Technical Assistance Program (NYTAP) for literary publishers, which includes publisher seminars, virtual roundtables, a literary mentorship program, the NYTAP regrant program, as well as travel grant awards. She also manages CLMP's national technical assistance program for independent literary publishers and organizes CLMP's popular literary magazine and small press fairs across the country. Jamie holds an MFA from Bard College's Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts and currently serves as an Associate Fiction Editor at *Fence* magazine.

Robert Stein is a Visiting Scholar at New York University and the Director of The Institute for the Future of the Book. The institute has two principal activities; one is building high-end tools for making multi-modal networked documents and the other is exploring and hopefully influencing the evolution of new forms of discourse as it moves from printed pages to networked screens. Previously Stein was the founder of The Voyager Company where over a 13-year period he led the development of over 300 titles in The Criterion Collection, a series of definitive films, and more than 75 CD ROM titles including the *CD Companion to Beethovens Ninth Symphony*, *Who Built America?*, Marvin Minskys *The Society of Mind*, and *American Poetry of the Nineteenth Century*.

Steven J. Tepper is associate director of the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy and assistant professor in the department of sociology at Vanderbilt. Prior to Vanderbilt, Tepper served as deputy director of the Princeton University Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies. His research and teaching has focused on creativity in society; conflict over art and culture; and cultural participation. Recently, he has published two cover stories for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* focusing on creativity and cultural participation, "The Next Great Cultural Transformation," (with Bill Ivey) and "The Creative Campus: Who's Number 1?" He has also published articles on public art, culture and democracy, literary reading and gender, and the creative economy. Tepper is co-editor of and contributing author to the book *Engaging Art: The Next Great Transformation of America's Cultural Life* (Routledge 2007). He is currently completing a book on cultural conflict and social change in American cities. Tepper holds a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; a master's in public policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government; and a Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton University

Nathalie Costa Thill has been the Executive Director of the Adirondack Center for Writing, the literary organization serving the entire six-million-acre Adirondack Park, pretty much since its inception in 1999. ACW offers wide array of literary programs, from workshops, conferences, and readings to retreats for high school students, prison writing programs, and writing contests. All of these events are offered in different corners of the Park in venues as varied as nature centers, ski chalets, arts centers, libraries, and prisons. Before moving to the Adirondacks, Nathalie traveled the world as an archaeologist, with a concentration in Anatolia (Modern day Turkey).

Laurie Dean Torrell, LitTAP NYS Director, has 25 years of experience in non-profit organizations. As Executive Director of Just Buffalo Literary Center, Laurie oversees one of the

top community-based literary centers in the country, with programs including Literary Buffalo, Readings, Author visits, community-wide reading events, writing workshops, *Writers in Education* programs, a comprehensive website, and publications. Since joining Just Buffalo in 2002, she has worked with staff and board to double the organization's budget (\$325K to \$650K), and to secure competitive national, state, and local grants – most recently one of only 3 NEA stimulus grants awarded in Buffalo – to bring literary arts programming to the local community. She has led the organization in implementing a new mission statement, strategic plan, focused operational direction, and in launching new programs including *Babel* International author series (which sold out its second season at 900 subscriptions and has been moved to a larger venue), and *Writing With Light* (collaborative education programming created with CEPA Gallery). With colleagues from CEPA and Big Orbit Gallery, Just Buffalo has created a first-of-its kind administrative collaboration which Laurie has written about in: "*All for One, One for All*" published in Board Member, July/August 2009 and "*Concentric Concerns: The Art of Administrative Collaboration*," published in CultureWork: A Periodic Broadside for Arts and Culture Workers <http://culturework.uoregon.edu> , January, 2009.

Lena Valencia is an Associate Web Editor at BOMB Magazine. She edits the BOMBlog and oversees the BOMB Archive Project: the ongoing digitization of 28 years of BOMB interviews. She also coordinate BOMB's presence across multiple social networking platforms.

E.J. Van Lanen is an editor at Open Letter Books and a regular contributor to Three Percent, a weblog dedicated to international literature.

Janine Pommy Vega is a poet, author and master teacher. Since 1987 she has been Director of Incisions/Arts, an organization of writers working with men, women, and children in prison.

Margo Viscusi was a founding board member of Poets House, president for many years, and since last February president emerita, but still very involved. She has served on the boards of Yaddo, the arts colony in Saratoga Springs, and Glimmerglass Opera in Cooperstown among other organizations. She is currently on the boards of Miller Theater at Columbia University and the Center for the Humanities at CUNY Graduate School.